THE Good Mans Death LAMENTED.

A SERMON

Preached at *Mary Woolnoth* in *Lumbard-street London, June* 18th 1655.

At the Funerall of that faithfull servant of Christ Mr RALPH ROBINSON, Minister of the Gospell, and Pastor of the Church there.

By SIMEON ASHE, Pastor of the Church at *Austins London.*

MIC. 6. 9.

The Lords voice crieth unto the City, and the man of wisdome shall see thy Name. Hear ye the rod and who hath appointed it.

2 KING. 2. 11, 12.

Elijah went up by a whirlwinde into Heaven. And Elisha saw it, and cried; My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him no more.

LONDON,
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To the Right Worſhipfull

Sr THOMAS VINER

Knight and Alderman of the famous City of *London*.

SIRS,

THere is no man, unto whom the Dedication of this Funerall Sermon *doth ſo juſtly belong, as to your ſelf. For you did not onely, reſpectively own* Mr Robinſon *as your Paſtor, but you did alſo yeeld unto him, all his life-long, all due incouragements in the way of his Miniſtry: which particulars doe deſerve the Record of a thankefull acknowledgement. And as you have been a real mourner for his death, ſo have you had the chiefeſt hand, to bring this Sermon unto the Preſs, that it might ſpeak ſomewhat of his worth, and become ſerviceable to the publick. My ſincere deſire both in preaching and printing it, hath been, to promote the ſpiritual profit of Gods people, concerned in this afflicting providence. And I have preſumed to prefix your Name, to teſtifie ſome gratitude, for your reell expreſſions of reſpect unto my ſelfe. Sr, God doth remember and will recompence to your ſelf and yours, all your love layed forth*

upon his Name, in kindness shewed to his servants. And by endeavouring earnestly to bring in a successor, who may vigorously carry on Gods work in your Congregation, both in regard of Worship and Discipline, according to Mr Robinson's practice, you shall be called, the repairer of the breach *made by his decease. By this practice also, you shall gain many prayers, and God shall receive much honour which will add undoubtedly to the comfort of your account at the last day. My prayers are, that your self, with your Lady and Children, may inherit all the precious privileges, purchased by the blood of our ever-blessed Saviour. Sir, If you will be pleased to pardon, and to accept this my bold address, I shall be yet further obliged to be*

Your Worships humble servant

July 18th 1655.

in the service of your soul

SIMEON ASHE.

TEXT.

The Text.

Isa. 57. 1.

The Righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart, and Mercifull men are taken away, none considring that the Righteous is taken away, from the evil to come.

I Could with more ease Weep then Speak, if my Tears might more edifie this Congregation, then my Words. But it was the request of my much endeared Friend and Brother (whose buriall occasioneth this great Assembly) that I should Preach his Funerall Sermon, therefore I shall undertake that work from the words now read.

The subject matter of my Text is *Lamentation*: a subject very sutable and seasonable for the dolefull dispensation which hath brought us together at this time. *The righteous perisheth and no man layeth it to heart*, &c.

In the words, the complaint, with the reall grounds thereof are held forth together. Hence may be noted,

That godly ones, either can, or (at least) should be able to render a rationall account of their sorrows.

He acteth not like a man, whose actions are irrationall: and reason rectified by Scripture light, should bethe rule of all gratious affections. Could Christians hold to *this* direction, their heart-motions would be more commendable and comfortable. By this means affections would be raised, when too low; and when too high; they would be well abated.

But this generall observation I do only point at in my passage to the particulars more intended in the Text.

My Text giveth a threefold account of the *Lamentation* which it breatheth.

First, A sad providence, *viz.* The death of the godly, whether one or more, which is amplified by the description 1. Both of their persons: 2. And of their death. As for their persons, they are called *Righteous, Mercifull ones.* And their death is discovered by these expressions, *They perish, They are taken away.*

Secondly, The sad consequence which this black providence doth presage, *Evill to come.*

Thirdly, The common sad senselesness and stupidity of people under this grievous providence and presage, *No man layeth it to heart: None considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come.*

Thus you see the three grounds of the grievous complaint poured forth in my Text, and all three very sad. 1. That persons so good, should by strokes of death perish, and be thereby taken away from the places which enjoyed them. 2. That hereupon a black cloud threatning a common storm, should be espied impending, hanging over the places from whence they are removed. 3. That people under such awakening dispensations, should generally be found stupid and senseless. In all these three regards it was not without cause that this our Gospel-Prophet doth thus affectionately express himself in my Text, *The righteous perisheth, &c.*

In this distribution of my Text, I have almost prevented my self in the Interpretation of the words, which may be expected. Herein I shall not be long.

Gen. 7. 1. Luk. 1. 6. Rom. 9. 30. & 10. 4. Eph. 4. 24. & 5. 9. 1 Joh. 3. 7. Deut. 6. 25.

The righteous man. Every Christian of ordinary understanding doth know in what sense Gods servants are called and accounted *righteous* in the Scriptures, *viz.* Because 1. Christs righteousness is imputatively by faith made over unto them in Justification. 2. Principles of reall righteousness are planted in them, by the Regenerating operation of the holy Ghost. 3. And there are sincere, actuall endeavours, through the assistance of Divine grace, to conform unto the Law of righteousness in their conversations.

Now

Now concerning the *righteous men* here mentioned in the Text, there are various thoughts amongst Interpreters. Some appropriate the phrase unto Christ, who is indeed oft deservingly called *The righteous one*: And whose death is too little laid to heart by the children of men. *Piscat. de Christo.*

Others do apply it unto King *Josiah*, who is commended in sacred Records, both for his justice and piety, according to this description, *He judged the cause of the poor and the needy. He walked in the waies of David his father, and declined neither to the right hand nor to the left.* Whose sudden death in the midst of his daies, called for deep lamentation in the Church of God. Jer. 22. 16. 2 Chro. 34. 2.

And some Expositors conjecture, that by the righteous man mentioned in the Text, the Prophet *Isaiah* meant himself prophecying of his own death, who was Martyred by a wooden saw. As the description given may be truly applyed unto him, so conceiving the speech to be figurative by an *Antonomasia* it may thus be understood. *De Isaia, qua Antonomastice Justus vocatur Sanctus.*

But the word seemeth more generall, being taken *collectively*, as in many other places. *The Lord trieth the righteous. Many are the troubles of the righteous*: Where though the expression be singular, yet it is of generall extension. Annotat. on Text. Psal. 11. 5. & 34. 19.

Mercifull men. The Originall word is of large signification, as Interpreters observe. Its translated Saints, gracious Saints, bountifull men, men of kindness, or mercifull men, as our Translation rendreth it. And thus Gods people are styled. חסיד *Viri misericordiæ, viri benignitatis. Quos Dominus misericordiâ suâ amplexus est.* Calv.

1. Both passively, because they have received a share in the peculiar mercies of the Almighty. *Which in times past were not a people, but are now the people of God; Which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.* 1 Pet. 2. 9, 10.

2. And actively, because sanctifying grace hath planted tender compassions in their bosoms. *As the Elect of God* (saith the Apostle) *holy and beloved, put on bowels of mercies, kindnesse, meeknesse,* &c. And *the righteous man is mercifull to his beast*; whereas *the tender mercies of the wicked are cruell.* Col. 3. 12. Prov. 12. 10.

This passage thus explicated, some Interpreters do appropriate unto those servants of God, both Prophets and others, whom *Manasseh* cruelly put to death; of whom the Scripture Hebræi hoc referunt ad Prophetas & Justos quos plurimos occidit Manasse. Lapid.

giveth this reproachfull character, *Manasseh shed innocent blood, very much, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another.* But doubtless the Prophets purpose was to extend it further then that History.

2. Reg. 21. 26. Hæc generalia verba Prophetæ ad quosvis justos spectare, &c.

It followeth, These righteous, mercifull ones are said to *perish*. What is the sense of that word? Hereby the Prophet questionless intends no more then their dissolution by naturall death; as when elsewhere he speaketh of some *ready to perish in the land of Assyria*. In which sense also *Saul* was said *to perish in battell*. And the Prophet here (as some do note) useth the common language of those times, wherein some imagined their dissolution by death, to be no less then utter perdition.

Isa. 27. 13. 1 Sam. 26. 10. Oculis insipientium perire videntur. Muscul.

In the word translated *taken away*, there is a Metaphor. It signifieth a gathering of ripe fruit, when it is taken away out of the field into the barn, in the accomplishment of that promise to Gods people, that they shall *come to the grave, as a shock of corn cometh in in his season*. And some conceive the sense to be the same with the phrase of being *gathered to their fathers*, whereby the death of the godly is ordinarily expressed in the Old Testament.

Job 5. 26. Colliguntur ad patres. Vatabl.

The other words, which might here be explained, *viz. Evil to come. Not laying to heart. Not considering*, I shall have occasion hereafter to speak unto, and therefore I touch not upon them here, because I am unwilling to Tautologize.

Now from my Text thus farre laid open, both in its division and interpretation, there are seven profitable Doctrines, well worth our serious consideration.

1. *Gods people are righteous and mercifull ones.*
2. *These righteous and mercifull ones are subject to death.*
3. *By death righteous and mercifull ones do perish and are taken away.*
4. *When righteous and mercifull ones do perish and are taken away, then evils are coming.*
5. *Such sad providences should be considerately laid to heart.*
6. *That people generally are senselesly regardless of these sad dispensations.*
7. *That this sinfull stupidity, is a matter of much lamentation unto gracious hearts.*

It

It cannot be expected that I should dispatch all these truths in one Sermon, therefore I intend to undertake one Doctrine, which is most comprehensive, In the handling whereof I will take in the rest.

Doct. *The death of godly ones should considerately be laid to heart.*

To make fair way for the proof and the prosecution of this Doctrine in that sense which is most seasonable, and principally in mine aim. Consider that this phrase of *laying to heart* the death of the righteous, doth suggest that sorrow with which all gracious souls should be deeply affected upon such sad dispensations (as Expositors observe) and those who are insensible of this rod, not being troubled at all at it, are such persons who are said in the Text, not to lay this providence to heart. Some Expositors do seek to explain this phrase by a parellel expression in the originall, where *Samuel* bad *Saul* not *to set his minde* upon the lost Asses, desiring to take off his grief in that regard.

Ponere super cor est judiciis affici, & aliquo illorum sensu tangi. Muscul. *Non commoventur.* Lapide.

1 Sam. 9 20. *Ne ponas cor tuum Asinis.* Marlor.

This being premised, somewhat to clear the expression of *laying to heart*, I proceed to the proof of the point, by the approved practise of Gods people in all ages, mournfully laying to heart the death of their fellow Saints and servants.

When God was pleased to translate old *Jacob*, who as a Prince, had wrestled with the Lord and prevailed, Holy story reports, that *all the house of Joseph, and his brethren, and his fathers house, mourned with a great and very sore lamentation.* Upon the decease of *Moses* that faithfull servant of the Lord, *The children of Israel wept for Moses thirty daies.* And when the Prophet *Samuel died, all the Israelites were gathered together, and lamented him.* If we pass forward unto the times of the New Testament, we shall reade of the like expressions of sorrow in the Churches of Christ, upon the removall of godly ones, out of the Land of the living. When the holy Martyr *Steven* was stoned to death, by his stifnecked stubborn persecutors, *Devout men carried Steven to his buriall, and made great lamentation over him.* And *Peter* coming to *Joppa* upon the death of *Dorcas*, *All the widows stood by him weeping.* Yea upon the report of a prophesie, foretelling St *Pauls* death, the Disciples discovered such deep sorrows, that he expresseth himself thus pathetically unto them,

Gen. 50. 8, 10.

Deut. 34. 8.

1 Sam. 25. 1.

Act. 8. 2.

Act 9 39.

Act. 21. 13. *what mean ye to weep and to break my heart?*

The reasons of the Doctrine might now be expected to make it manifest to your consciences, That godly ones have abundant cause, with lamentation, to lay to heart the death of the righteous. But before I speak unto them, I must crave leave to suggest this caution that their grief in these cases doth not arise from any apprehensions that righteous and mercifull ones are in the least prejudiced by their death and departure out of this world. This must necessarily be presupposed,

Mos ipsum est Dei consilium in gratiam piorum. Muscul. And our Annotations.

1. Because it is one design of the Text, to administer matter of comfort against the fear of death, whether by the cruelty of oppressors, or otherwise.

2. Because some persons, through ignorance and passion, are apt to censure such to be under Divine displeasure, who are unexpectedly taken away by stroaks of death. *Remember I pray thee* (saith *Eliphaz* to *Job*) *Who ever perished being innocent? or where were the righteous cut off?*

Job 4. 7.

3. That some relief, some refreshing may be reached forth unto such whose hearts are ready to sink upon the thought of their dear friends and near relations removed by death. Herein St *Paul* was very carefull, *I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that you sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.*

1 Thess. 4. 13.

We must know therefore, 1. That the death of the godly as to themselves, is promised as an evidence of the Lords speciall love. As to *Abraham*, *Thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace.* So to *Josiah*, *I will gather thee to thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered to thy fathers in peace*, &c.

Gen. 15. 15.

2 Chro. 34. 28.

2. That howsoever the Text phraseth their death a *perishing*, yet it is most certain that this their perishing doth not intimate, either their anihilation or utter destruction. Indeed the Psalmist useth this word *perish* to express the frustration and the anihilation of mans designs by death, *In that day all his thoughts perish.* But the verse following the Text assureth us, that its otherwise with the righteous, in reference to their dead bodies, *They shall rest in their graves, each one walking in his uprightness.* And although the Apostle *Peter* thus expresseth the destruction of the wicked, *They shall utterly perish*; yet it is far otherwise with the

Psal. 146. 4.

Isa. 57. 2.

2 Pet. 2. 12.

the righteous, upon natures downfall, for thereupon *The spirits of just men are made perfect.* As while they live *There shall not one hair of their head perish,* (they shall not be one hair the worse for any providence) so neither can their death tend in the least unto their disadvantage. The Apostle assureth Gods servants, that *death is no less theirs, i.e.* for benefit, then life it self, yea and elsewhere he confidently asserts, that death to himself and such as himself, *is gain.* And what though death be a taking of Gods people away, from the further enjoyment of friends and other comforts on earth; (As *Hezekiah* expecting death thus expresseth himself, *I shall behold men no more, with the inhabitants of the world.*) Yet the change shall be very much for advantage, because *to be with Christ is far better.*

Heb. 12.23. Luk. 21.18. 1 Cor. 3.21. Phil. 1.21. Isa. 38.11. Phil. 1.23.

Having touched upon these things, partly to prevent mistakes in some, and partly to hint words of comfort unto others, I proceed to give an account of the Reasons of my Doctrine, and therein of the practice of Gods people, laying lamentingly to heart the death of righteous and mercifull ones. And my Text doth suggest three, which I shall speak unto distinctly, and yet with brevity.

Because they are *righteous and mercifull ones,* therefore is their death upon good ground deeply lamented. *Reason 1.*

These two qualifications do demonstrate 1. Their worthiness in regard of their own persons; *The righteous is more excellent then his neighbour.* 2. And their usefulness in their conversation. This difference the Apostle *Paul* pointeth at, betwixt a *righteous man and a good man.*

Prov. 12.26. Rom. 5.7.

First, The godly (because such) are very dear unto the Lord, and unto all such, who by grace are like to him. *Know ye that God hath set apart to himself, the man that is godly. The Lord loveth the righteous.* And let *David* be hearkened unto, while he speaketh the sense of all Saints regenerated by the same Spirit, *The Saints that are upon earth, in whom is all my delight.* Hence it is, that their hearts ake, and their eyes do weep complaints, when these dye, because *the precious sonnes of Sion, comparable to fine gold,* are carried to the dust. Here may be applied *Davids* mourning over *Saul* and *Jonathan,* with such like grounds thereof, suggested, *And David lamented with this lamentation*

Psal. 4.3. & 146.8. Psal. 16.3. Lam. 4.2.

2 Sam. 1. 17, 19, 23, 26. *over Saul and over Jonathan his sonne, The beauty of Israel is slain upon the high places, how are the mighty fallen! Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives: I am distressed for thee my brother Jonathan, very pleasant hast thou been unto me.* Although the servants of the most High God, do not in outward greatnes and splendor exceed the people of the world, yet they are Gods favourites, beautified with his Image, advanced by his Majesty, to the highest titles and places of honour and renown, in which regards its reasonable that their death should be lamented.

Secondly, Adde to their personall worth, their great usefulnes in their lives. As their godlines doth endear them unto God and all good men; so their mercifulnes doth draw them forth unto the utmost, that they may be profitable by improving their interest in every kinde for that end and purpose. *Lots* prayer did secure the safety of the place for which he spake, *I* Gen. 19. 21, 22 *have accepted thee, and will not destroy this City for which thou hast spoken. Hast thee, get thee thither, for I cannot do any thing* Psal. 106. 23. *till thou be come thither.* And *Moses stood up, and turned away Gods wrath, when he said that he would destroy them.* One righteous man in *Jerusalem* might have prevented its ruine. Not only *Laban* in regard of *Jacob*, but *Potiphar* in reference to *Joseph*, knew by experience how profitable and prosperous the Gen. 30. 27. & 39. 5. presence of pious persons is, to the places where they live.

Precibus iram Dei cohibent. Lapide. Jer. 5. 1.

No marvell therefore if the death of such be bitterly bewailed by ingenuous Christians, upon the remembrance of their former usefulnes in the severall places where Divine providence had disposed of them. By this argument *David* perswadeth tears upon the death of *Saul* and *Jonathan*, *Ye daughters of Israel weep* 2 Sam. 1. 24, 25. *over Saul, who clothed you with scarlet and with other delights, who put on ornaments of gold upon your apparell. O Jonathan thou wast slain in thine high places.* And upon the like account did *Elisha*, upon the departure of his Master *Elijah*, *cry out, My* 2 Kings 2. 12. *father, my father, the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof.* Thus the one upon the commemoration of provisions and the other upon the consideration of preservation enjoyed by their lives, do see cause to bewail the death of the forementioned Worthies.

Give

Give me leave here to apply the practice of the *Widdowes, who stood by* Paul, *weeping and shewing the coates and garments which Dorcas made while she was with them.* Did we in like manner call to minde, the great good done to the publick, by them who are lately dead, through their prayers both ordinary and extraordinary, we should be more afflicted, because of their decease. What deliverances wrought, dangers prevented, blessings procured, good designes promoted, bad causes checked, errors stifled, truths cleared, tolleration hindered, and the liberty of holy Ordinances continued! Such like meditations, might wound our hearts, upon the thought of their death, who have been thus happily instrumental, for publick good. Especially if we add that which followeth in the second Reason. Act. 9 39.

Because by death they *perish and are taken away.* Although (as you heard before) themselves are in a safe and blessed condition, yet as to us, and in regard of further service on earth, *they perish*, being taken from the improvement of any further opportunities in that kinde. There is a double Metaphor in the phrase of *taking away*, as Interpreters note. Either they are taken away, as Corn that is gathered out of the field, and carried into the barn: or as things of price, are taken from one place, to be hid for safety in another. Both these Similitudes, do speak Gods special care of them, as *David* with comfort applieth the phrase to himselfe. *When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will gather me*, or take me up. *Reason* 2. *Congregantur collecti. Arr. Monta.* Job 5.26. *Recordantur in sepulchris.* Pisc. Psal. 27.10.

But these words report sad tydings unto them, who abide still in the open field, subject to summer heat, and winter storms, when such and such are inned and gathered, layed up and hid, full safe from all dangers and discomforts. No doubt but that question came cold to *Elisha* his heart: *Knowest thou, that the Lord will take away thy Master from thy head to day?* He who hath been thy guide and Instructer, shall teach thee no more. Thus by means of death, *godly ones cease and faile from among the children of men*, which is a cutting thought unto surviving Saints. This this was that, which opened the floud-gates unto the Christians tears, when *Pauls* death was foretold them: *They all wept sore, and fell on Pauls neck and kissed him; sorrowing most of all for the words &c.* Musc. *which he spake, that they should see his face no more.* These words, 2 King. 2.3. Psal. 12.1. *Dolore cordis, intra se pressus, sic prorumpit,* Musc. Acts 20.37,38

O these sad words, that *they should see his face no more*, could not be got down without a draught of teares. In this respect, they *sorrowed most of all*. Might their want of him, have been for some few weeks, moneths or years, then hope of his return would have administred some relief: but this word, *No more*, you shall see my face no more; this, this, increaseth much the measure of their mourning. And thus it is (my beloved) when death taketh away our fellow servants, our faithfull Ministers, we shall see their faces no more, enjoy their communion on earth no more. In this regard therefore, there is reason, wherefore all godly ones, doe *lay their death to heart*.

Here let us somewhat further consider, some few of the sad consequences of their taking away.

1. Hereby the number of Saints is abated. The people of God are in comparison of the wicked, but *a little diminitive flock*, and therefore it is a matter of lamentation, when this little number is lessened. *Woe is me, for I am, as when they have gathered the Summers fruits, as the Grape-gleanings of the vintage, there is no cluster. The good man is perished out of the earth.* When our number is the greatest, we know not how well to spare one, but rather wish for more, therefore the breaking of the cluster, is a matter of heart-breaking consideration. This was the cause (as some Expositors judge) of the dolefull out-cry: *Help Lord, for the godly man ceaseth*, &c. Alas, alas, how is their number abated! how few! yea they are fewer and fewer, from day to day. We hear often of the diminution, but we seldome heare of the augmentation of righteous and mercifull ones.

Luk. 12. 23. τὸ μικρὸν ποίμνιον. Mic. 7. 1, 2. *Diminuti sunt.* The 70 render it ὠλιγάθησαν, *ad paucos pedati sunt.* Piscat. in Psal. 12. 1.

2. Their influentiall, beneficiall fellowship ceaseth. How spiritually seasoning was their society to many souls. They were unto those with whom they conversed, as *leven is unto bread*, to make it the more savoury, or (as our Saviour speaketh) *like salt*, which preventeth putrefaction, and maketh savoury. What humble, meek, mercifull, heavenly dispositions, are frequently wrought and preserved in Christian bosomes, by the communion of living Saints! and is it not matter of much lamentation, to have them withdrawn?

Sunt eis, quasi fermentum pani. Lapid. in Text Mat. 5. 13.

3. That a period is put unto the manifold advantages, which were wont to be vouchsafed by their gracious conference. Beams of

of light were darted into dark mindes, ſpirituall ſparks were kindled in frozen breaſts, holy ſupports were put under ſinking hearts, ſatisfying anſwers were returned unto the ſcruples of perplexed ſpirits: No marvell therefore, if the righteous do deeply lay this loſſe to heart. The hearts of the two Diſciples *burned within them*, by meanes of Chriſts conference, in which reſpect they were loath to leave his company. And this is one reaſon, wherefore the death of Saints ſhould be bewailed, becauſe in their life time, they perſwade good, diſſwade evil; cheriſh vertue, check vice; oppoſe error, appear for truth; awaken the ſecure, quicken the dull, give caveats to the careleſſe, and cordials to the diſconſolate. What gracious heart can doe leſſe then bleed, upon the loſſe of them, who have been, in theſe and ſuch like kindes, even by their communion, abundantly beneficiall.

Luk. 24. 29. with 32. *Qui verbo, & principes, & populum ad virtutem, excitant.* Lapid. in text.

4. Their death, depriveth them who ſurvive of the fruit of their many prayers, which they were wont upon all emergencies and occaſions, to pour forth before the Lord.

Remember, how *Iſrael prevailed, while Moſes held up his hands*, but *Amaleck* got ground, when his hands fell: yea the ſame *Moſes* held Gods hands, when he was ready to fall upon idolatrous *Iſrael* with breaking blowes. By his prayer, devouring flames were extinguiſhed, and the noyſome peſtilence ceaſed, upon the courſe taken by *Aaron*, according to his counſell. In theſe regards, *Iſrael* had ſufficient reaſon, to *weep many dayes*, when this man of God was taken away. Theſe particulars I will not amplifie by application to our own times and experiences; though I am very confident, that many forfeited comforts have been continued, and many deſerved judgements have been prevented, and many ſweet bleſſings have been communicated, by means of thoſe men, much and mighty in prayer, who have lately been taken away, from this City, from *Cambridge*, and ſundry other places in this Nation. This therefore I add, as my ſecond reaſon, which will yet be ſtrengthened by the third.

Exo. 17, 11, 12. Exo. 32. 10 Num. 11. 2, 3. Num. 16. 46, 48. Deut. 34. 8.

Becauſe the taking away of ſuch gracious, fruitfull, prayerfull Chriſtians, doth prognoſticate and foreſhew *evil to come*. As before the clouds ſhowred down water, *Elijah ſaid to Ahab, there is ſound of much raine*: ſo they may hear the ſtorm coming, in the thunder of divine threats, but God often taketh his ſervants away,

Reaſon 3. 1 Kings 18. 44.

Præire mali (i.e.) *antequam veniat malum.* Pifcat.

that the tempeſt of trouble may not beate upon them. Thus *Joſiah* by peruſing ſacred Records, did foreſee wrath coming, but this was the promiſe of God (which accordingly was performed) *Thou ſhalt be gathered into thy grave in peace, and thine eyes ſhall not ſee all the evil, which I will bring upon this place.*

2 King. 22. 19, 20.

There are three things to be enquired after in the enlarging of this Reaſon: 1. What evils may probably be coming when the godly die. 2. Wherefore, upon ſuch providences, evils may be expected. 3. Upon what account this preſage of approaching evil, is a matter of ſad complaint unto gracious hearts.

Judicium eſt immittere gravem ultionem Dei, & publicum judicium, Muſcul.

Firſt, The evil likely to come in, upon the death of the godly, is ſome great and common judgement. As the captivity was the evil coming, when good *Joſiah* was taken away. So that, in ſuch caſes, we may not onely ſuſpect the future ſuffering of ſome few perſons or particular Congregations and places, but that judgements coming will be more univerſall. And for one kinde of common calamity then to be looked for (which is indeed the worſt, and the cauſe of all the reſt,) it is the inundation of wickedneſſe. There is too much cauſe to ſuſpect, that error and iniquity will flow in as a floud, when Gods people are taken away. Thus the tyde of Idolatry returned with ſtrength upon *Iſrael* after *Joſiah* his death. This is noted by many Expoſitors, from the coherence of my Text with the foregoing Chapter, that the ſecurity and ſenſuality of the Prieſts, amongſt others, was the conſequence of their death, who in their life time, did with all their might, make oppoſition againſt the prevailing evils of thoſe times. Now the Lord knowing that ſuch bruitiſh and barbarous courſes, would cauſe the tender hearts of his people to bleed within them, therefore he took them away by death.

Propter malum mundo venturum. Arius Mont.

Mox, à morte illius ad priſtinos falſos cultus ſuos relapſi. Muſ.

Iſa. 56 10, 11, 12. with Cap. 57. 1.

Ne videant mala, quæ in mundo ſunt, quibus oculi cruciantur, dum tantam pertidiam tantam impietatem ſpectant. Marlor.

Iſa. 1. 9.

Secondly, When the godly die, then ſuch incomes of evil, both of ſinne and puniſhment may be expected: becauſe it is from Gods tender reſpect unto them, that deſerved judgements are deferred. *Except the Lord of hoſts had left unto us a very ſmall remnant, we ſhould have been as Sodome, and we ſhould have been like unto Gomorrah.* As the woman with childe, being condemned to death, for felony or murther, is reprieved till ſhe be delivered of her childe. Moreover, righteous and mercifull ones are like the pillars, which beare up the building; therefore, as when *Sam-*

Pſal. 75 3. Judg. 16. 29, 30.

ſon

Sum quaſi columen Reipublicæ, & quaſi columna ſuſtentans. Lapid. in Text Gen. 7. 1, 4. & 19. 23, 24.

ſon plucked down the two pillars upon which the houſe ſtood, it fell; ſo how can better be imagined, then ruines upon the removall of the righteous. So ſoon as *Noah* was ſhipped, being taken into the Ark, forthwith comes the deluge, which drowned the old world: and when *Lot* was removed out of *Sodom*, preſently it was conſumed by fire from Heaven.

Thirdly, Gracious hearts do lament the loſſe of pious perſons thus preſaging evil to come, both becauſe of their reſpect to God, and the ſurviving party. The diſhonour done unto God by the inlet of ſin, and the unavoidable ſufferings of his people, by the inlet of judgements, can do no leſſe then afflict their hearts.

The man of God wept, when he foreſaw that *Hazael* would *ſet on fire Iſraels ſtrong holds, ſlay their young men with the ſword, daſh their children, and rip up their women with childe.* And tears ran down our Saviours cheeks, when he looked upon *Jeruſalem*, with ſuch like thoughts. *He beheld the City, and wept over it, ſaying, If thou hadſt known, even thou, at leaſt in this thy day, the things which belong to thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the dayes ſhall come upon thee, that thine enemies ſhall caſt a trench about thee and compaſſe thee round, and keep thee in on every ſide; and ſhall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee, and they ſhall not leave in thee one ſtone upon another, becauſe thou kneweſt not the time of thy viſitation.*

2 Kin. 8. 11, 12

Luk. 19. 41, 42, 43, 44.

Beloved, What God will doe with *London* I cannot propheſie: but doubtleſſe our ſins deſerve *Jeruſalems* judgement, and the removall of ſo many pillars, ſo many burning and ſhining lights of late, doth prognoſticate evil to come, therefore there is cauſe enough to lay their death to heart.

Having thus diſpatched the confirmation of the Point (wherein I have been larger then I intended) I proceed to the application, wherein I will be more ſhort, touching upon heads, and ſhall leave the amplification unto your own practice.

And firſt this truth may many wayes be improved, for our information in ſundry particulars:

Uſe 1. Information 1.

Hence obſerve, what honour the Lord is pleaſed to put upon his faithfull ſervants (however the world undervalueth them as the off-ſcouring of all things) that their death is deeply lamented by all gracious ſouls. This was promiſed as an expreſſion

Jer. 34.5. of divine respect to *Zedekiah* King of *Judah*: *They shall burn odours for thee, and they will lament thee saying, Ah Lord.* Whereas this was threatned as a signe of Gods displeasure against *Jehoiakim*. *They shall not lament for him saying, Ah Lord, or ah his glory.*

Jer. 22.18.

2. 2. Therefore *pretious in the sight of the Lord himself is the death of his Saints.* His majesty who commandeth, and enableth his servants to lay to heart the death of his people, will not suffer their blood to be shed, and their lives to be poured out by oppressors and persecutors, without calling them unto account. This is one commendable character of Jesus Christ, *Israels* King, *He shall redeeme their soul from deceit and violence, and pretious shall their blood be in his sight*: Whether the lives of Gods servants be shortned by false-imprisonment, unjust sentences, or unwarrantable wars, there is no question of it, but that their murtherers shall be severely reckoned with, for their bloudy fraud and force. You may take an instance hereof in *Cain*, who was of the wicked one, and slew his brother; God sendeth (as it were) Hue and Cry after him. Cain, *thy brothers blood cryeth unto me from the ground, and now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brothers blood from thy hand.* This I may not enlarge, but I wish, that the tormenting-awakenings of that murtherers conscience, may warn all the enemies of Gods people, to take heed of all acts of policie or power, which may hasten their death, which is lamented by the godly, and will be revenged by God.

Psal. 116.15.

Psal. 72.14.

Gen. 4.10, 11.

3. 3. Consider therefore how by way of rationall gradation, the grief of the godly should be greatned upon the death of their fellow-servants.

1. If the death of one single righteous person, how much more should the death of many of mercifull ones be bitterly lamented. This is open in the Text.

2. If the death of Saints, though only private persons, should be bewailed, how much more the losse of persons more publick in their places and employments. If great lamentation be made for *Dorcas*, how much more for *Stephen*, for *Paul*, for *Josiah*. *The Elders have ceased from the gate, the joy of our heart is ceased, our dance is turned into mourning. The Crown is*

Lam. 5.14, 15, 16.

fallen

fallen from our head. And (as you heard before) this righteous man pointed at in the Text, being the Prophet *Isaiah*, an eloquent, able, faithfull, Evangelicall Prophet, his death should the more be laid to heart.

3. How much more the death of such pious persons, such Magistrates and Ministers, who are peculiarly related to our selves, whether by obligations natural, civil, or Ecclesiasticall. As *Joseph and his brethren mourned for their good old father, with a great and very sore lamentation.* So *Elisha* upon the death of his Master *Eliah*, crieth out, *My Father, my Father.* In like manner should people, be more pained at the heart, when their Minister, their Pastor, is plucked away from them by the hand of death. Gen. 50.10. 2 Kings. 2.12.

4. Especially, when pious, publick persons and neerly related unto our selves are snatched away, while young, when in their growth and time of improvement. As *Josiah* slain when *but thirty nine years old.* What pity is it, to behold young fruit-bearing trees cut down. while spreading their branches and increasing yearly in their fruitfullnesse? So it is a matter of very sad consideration, to see young Saints, young Ministers translated, in the midst of their daies. 2 Chro. 34.2.

5. And this may yet give further occasion, to enlarge our sorrow, when such religious ones, eminent in regard of their places, are taken away, who were more then ordinarily active in laying forth themselves for God, and his Church, in all waies of service: How vigorously did young King *Josiah* bestirre himselfe, from the *sixteenth year* of his age to his end, that all matters in his Kingdome might be ordered according to the minde of God: and doubtlesse it was in this respect, that *all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah: and Jeremiah lamented for Josiah, and all the singing-men and the singing-women, spake of Josiah in their lamentations to this day, and made them an Ordinance in Israel, and behold they are written in the Lamentations.* 2 Chro. 34.1, 3. &c. & 35.1. &c. 2 Chro. 35.24, 25.

6. Lastly and principally, if this circumstance be added unto all the former (*viz.*) that such godly ones above described, are removed in such times, wherein there is most need and use of them; as now, when the Ministers were generally sloathfull,

full, covetous and ſenſuall, as in the concluſion of the foregoing
ct. 10, 11, 12. Chapter, *Slumbring, lying down and loving to ſlumber. They all look to their own way, every one for his gaine from his quarter. Come ſay they, I will fetch wine, and we will fill our ſelves with ſtrong drinke.* And now when that Proverb was verified; *Like Prieſt like people*; for the people were for the moſt part mot-kers and deſpiſers of Gods Miniſters, as ſome verſes following
ver. 3, 4. the Text do witneſſe: *Ye ſeed of the adulterer and of the Whore: Againſt whom do ye ſport your ſelves: againſt whom do ye make a wide mouth, and draw out the tongue? are ye not children of tranſgreſſion, a ſeed of falſhood?* Though I will not parallel theſe paſſages to our preſent times, yet I wiſh this may be conſidered; that the loſſe of godly ones, both Miniſters and others, in ſuch doleſull dayes, doth and ſhould much greaten the grief of gracious hearts.

4. The fourth Information followeth *(viz.)* That in this regard, Gods ſervants (ſuch eſpecially who are of moſt publike uſe in the Church of Chriſt,) ſhould the more carefully endeavour to continue their health and lives, that their loſſe may not bring matter of much lamentation amongſt the godly. As *Paul* himſelf,
Phil. 1. 23, 24, 25. in love to the *Philippians*, was content to *live on earth*, though he knew, that to be with Chriſt, would to himſelfe, *be farre better*: So this was his advice to young *Timothy*, *Drink no longer water,*
1 Tim. 5. 23. *but uſe a little wine, for thy ſtomacks ſake, and thine often infirmities.* And doubtleſſe if the health of any, ſhould be more indulged then others, then theirs, whoſe death will be moſt dolefull unto ſurviving Saints.

5. Therefore all ſorts of people ſhould take heed of ſuch courſes, whereby the lives of Gods Saints and ſeavants may be ſhortned. It is conſiderable how affectionately *Judah* pleaded to prevent that grief which might probably *bring the gray haires of his Fa-*
Gen. 44. 31, 33. *ther Jacob with ſorrow to the grave.* Let all learne hence, to beware of ſuch practiſes, which may break the ſtrength and hearts of Gods people with ſighing and ſorrow. Oh that people would beleeve, that their wickedneſſe doth weaken the bodies and haſten the death of their godly Miniſters. Reade the mone-making of
Iſa. 24. 16. the Prophet, *My leanneſſe my leanneſſe, woe unto me: the treacherous dealers have dealt treacherouſly, yea the treacherous dealers have*

have dealt very treacherously. And under this head of Information, I might give in another Caution to Christians (*viz.*) not to weaken and wear out their Ministers, by too too much employment. Although I acknowledge that most do more need the spur then the bridle, and should rather be spoken unto, as the Apostle advised the *Colossians* to say unto *Archippus*, *Take heed to the Ministry, which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfill it*: yet people upon the consideration of the point under hand, should in love to their Ministers lives, and their own comfort therein, be admonished, not to presse them unto more work, then the strength and estate of their bodies, can well beare without prejudice. In the time of Mosaicall administrations, this was Gods appointment (which he doth often repeate) that the Ministers should waite upon that work from *thirty years old and upward, even untill fifty years old*, intending, to indulge them, when aged and infirme. And questionlesse, this Ordinance of God, is not altogether without use now in the dayes of the Gospel.

Col 4.17.

Num. 4.3.23. 30,35,39,43.

6. Therefore the recovery and reparation of natures decayes, in godly ones, who have been dangerously diseased, should be accounted a great blessing, with the return of many thanksgivings to God, seeing by such providences, much sorrow to his servants is graciously prevented. The practice of the Apostle *Paul*, may be our pattern in this particular. who in reference unto *Epaphroditus* in such a case, doth thus expresse himself: *Indeed he was sick and nigh unto death, but God had mercy on him, and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow*.

Phil. 2,27.

Thus from the Use of Information, spread into many branches, I proceed to the Use of Reprehension.

Use 2. Reproofe.

And there are many who deserve blame upon this account, whom I shall briefly point at, with desire of their reformation.

1. All those, who are altogether sencelesse and regardlesse of such stroakes of providence, whereby the godly are removed out of the land of the living. My Text doth speake openly this reproof: This neglect is sinfull and blame worthy in all, but most horrid and inexcusable, when found in professors of religion and Ministers themselves, who sin herein against their light, and their pretended love, both to the godly and the to Gospel of Christ.

Crudeles expertes omnis condolentiæ. Sculter. in Text.

Much more do ſuch deſerve ſharp rebuke, who inſtead of mourning, do rejoyce and make merry, when godly ones, Miniſters and others are taken away. Some of our eyes have ſeen, and our ears heard the inſultations of ſome, in this kind blameworthy, *the Lord humble them and forgive them.* The Holy ghoſt doth ſtigmatize Antichriſtian brats with this character, that upon the death of the two Witneſſes, *they rejoyce over them, and make merry, and ſend guifts one to another.* And too many ſuch (I am afraid) there are amongſt our ſelves, who upon ſuch occaſions, do mourne (as our Proverb expreſſeth it) in ſack and ſugar, quaffing in wayes of ſinfull follity, when Gods faithfull Miniſters periſh and are taken away, but certainly the Lord who doth obſerve theſe things, will reckon with theſe wretches to their forrow, in his due time.

Rev. 11. 10.

3. What then ſhall be ſaid unto them, who jear Gods people for their ſorrow in ſuch caſes. *David* met with ſuch uſage, whereof he complained before the Lord: *When I wept and clothed my ſelf with ſack-cloth, that was to my reproach, and I became a proverb unto them, and I was the ſong of the drunkards.* Hence you may perceive, what debauched ones thoſe are, who behave themſelves thus unworthily. And I heartily wiſh, that they would ſeriouſly weigh the ſmart words which the Holy ghoſt ſpeaketh unto them (which I touched upon before,) *Againſt whom do ye ſport your ſelves? Againſt whom make ye a wide mouth, and draw out the tongue? are ye not children of tranſgreſſion, a ſeed of falſhood?*

Pſal. 69. 10, 11, 12.

Iſa. 57. 4.

4. How heavily doth my Doctrine fall upon them, who perſecute Gods people unto death, who by accuſations, impriſonments, and cruel ſentences, ſhorten the lives of them who are dear unto the Lord and his ſervants. Do you not remember how ſharply God expreſſeth himſelf againſt thoſe *who make the hearts of the righteous ſad?* And queſtionleſſe ſuch ſhall feele the weight of divine diſpleaſure, ſooner or later, who have made many thouſand hearts ſad, by martyring, by murthering ſome of the faithfull ſervants of the Almighty. The remembrance of ſuch like guilt, was gall and wormwood unto converted *Paul*, and without doubt, this ſin will ſit ſad upon their conſciences, who are guilty thereof, if ever the Lord give them grace to repent;

Ezek. 13. 22.

Act. 22. 4. & 26. 10, 11. 1 Cor. 15. 9.

But

But without repentance this good blond shed, to the sorrow of Saints, will sink the soules of these murtherers into the place of eternal vengeance. Gen. 4.10,11.

5. Lastly, This doctrine cometh in as a black bill of Indictment, against all such, who are so farre from a religious laying to heart the death of the righteous, that they hereupon grow the more lewd and licentious in their lives, imagining that God witnesseth favour to themselves by lengthening their lives, when others of a more godly strain, are carried to the grave. Sundry Expositors suggest this, from the Text; But I may not here enlarge my self, in declaring the horrid abuse of divine providence, I shall rather leave off this Use of Reproof, and proceed to Exhortation.

Imò audacius fuisse luxuriatos quia, sæ lucus secum agi, putent dum sumtissimi quibusque manebunt superstites. Calv.

Qui se ideo otio, et voluptati tradunt virtutisq; castra horrent. Sanctius.

To perswade the considerate laying to heart of the death of godly persons. This is the duty, the neglect whereof, my Text reproveth: And this is the practice, which the occasion of this meeting calleth for: yea not only the present providence, but many of like nature, lately in this City, in *Cambridge*, and elsewhere, should work us unto this disposition and duty, when such pillars, and so many, in so short a time are taken down, and many others at this day shaking and ready to fall, who have been of extraordinary use, both for the beauty and support of Church and State: is there not abundant cause, why these stroakes of divine displeasure, should considerately and deeply be laid to heart? Mr *Calvin* upon my Text, suggesteth the expediency of pressing this practice upon such occasions. And I do the rather see cause to perswade it, because it is commonly every where wofully neglected. The expression in the Text is considerable, *No man layeth it to heart, None considering*: The meaning is either absolutely, or comparatively: Absolutely (*h.e.*) not one of those sensual beasts, those secure livers, of whom the Prophet had spoken in the foregoing Chapter. No man, not one of these debauched persons, are affected with such like providences: Or Comparatively: As when the Apostle complained that *none seek the things of Christ*, he intended to tell, how few (*q.d.*) *none comparatively*: So I may say, in our present case. There are but few, yea very few, who do affectionately consider Gods heavy hand, in these sad, very sad providences.

Use 3. Exhortation.

Dr *Gouge.*
Mr *Gataker.*
Mr *Whitaker.*
Mr *Strong.*
Dr *Hill.*
Dr *Bolton.*
Mr *Wilson.*
Mr *Angell.*

Hæc doctrina omnibus sæculis convenientissima est.

Ista canes muti non cogitant de jactura, rei publicæ, quæ ante fulcrum, et Basin perdit. Lap.

Phil. 2. 21.

Moreover, I might yet further be induced to enlarge my self

in this particular, becauſe of the ſad conſequences of this neglect: For hereby people 1. Contract ſinfull guilt upon themſelves: 2. Expoſe the Nation to the further breaking out of Gods diſpleaſure: 3. And give others (who obſerve their ſtupidity and, ſenceleſneſſe) too much occaſion to believe, that ſuch and ſuch godly ones deceaſed, were not of any ſingular uſe while they lived, neither will there be any great want of them now they are dead.

Now in the amplifying of this Exhortation, I ſhall ſpeake unto two duties which my Text doth intimate (*viz.*) 1. Lamentation, 2. Conſideration: but I muſt and will be brief in both.

As for the former, the ſerious reviewing of the many particulars hinted in the Reaſons of my Doctrine, with the mixture of faith and meditation, may through Gods bleſſing, beget ſuch ſorrowes in our hearts, and draw ſuch teares from our eyes, as the Lord looketh for. And as further helps,

1. Lay to heart the death of the godly with lamentation.

1. Dwell upon the conſideration of the great worth and uſefulneſſe of thoſe, whom God hath taken from us by death. Remember their high parts, their rich graces, their abundant ſerviceableneſſe. Men orthodox in judgement, full of divine underſtanding, able to defend truth, and to confute error: Men full of love and zeal, for Chriſt, the Goſpel, the Sabbath, pure Ordinances, holy Diſcipline, and a rightly-conſtituted Miniſtry. Such like repreſentations of the Worthies whom we have lately loſt, may probably reach our hearts, with ſome ſuitable lamentations. And there may be the more hope hereof, if we would quickly deale in this kinde with our ſelves, while the providences are ſomewhat freſh in our mindes and memories. Thus Mr *Calvin* upon the Text, hinteth, in reference unto *Luthers* death, which he there inſtanceth.

Pietate inſignes &c. Variabl.

Quia hoc opus recens, & in eam inſigni Evangelii præconem & Prophetam.

2. Set before your eyes, godly mourners, as patterns of imitation. The Prophet *Jeremiah* gave this advice, *Call for the mourning Women, &c. let them teach you lamentation.* Conſider how many weeping eyes and bleeding hearts there be in many parts of this City, yea of this Nation, occaſioned by the death of Gods pretious ſervants. Think with your ſelves how many tears trickle down the cheekes of women made widowes, Children left fatherleſſe, and people ſcattered, like Sheepe without a Shepheard,

Jer. 9. 17, 20. Si vis me flere, &c.

heard, by theſe ſtroaks of providence. Look upon Jeſus Chriſt, ſympathizeing with *Martha*, and *Mary*, mourning for the death of their brother *Lazarus*. Behold him alſo weeping over *Jeruſalem*, in danger of deſolation, *for not knowing the day of her viſitation*. Warme muſings of this kind well wrought upon the heart, may be helpfull to work this mournfull frame, which now I perſwade, and God expecteth. Joh. 11. 35. Luk. 19. 40.

And if the Lord ſhall be pleaſed by theſe meanes, to melt your ſpirits into a mourning temper, take theſe directions to guide their Actings.

1. Charge your loſſes and the conſequentiall ſorrowes upon your ſins, as the deſerving cauſes thereof. As they in their lamenting the death of *Joſiah*, do thus expreſſe themſelves. *The Crown is fallen from our head! woe unto us, that we have ſinned.* Lam. 5. 16.

2. Eaſe your burthened hearts, by powring them forth into the boſome of God. As *Hannah* ſaid to *Eli*, *I am a woman of a ſorrowfull ſpirit, and have poured out my ſoul before the Lord.* So the Prophet *Micah*, bringeth in the Church, in this manner, bewailing her ſelf to God, upon the leſſening of the number of godly ones, in his times. *Woe is me for I am, as when they have gathered the Summer fruits, as the Grape-gleaning of the vintage: there is no cluſter; the good man is periſhed out of the earth.* 1 Sam. 1. 15. Mich. 7. 1, 2.

3. Be the more often and earneſt in your addreſſes to God, by prayer. Herein the practiſe of the Pſalmeſt is recorded, for our imitation. *Help Lord for the Godly man ceaſeth, for the faithfull fail, from among the Children of men.* In this manner, doth holy faith work out prayer from a troubled heart, looking out for ſupplyes from the fountaine, when the ſtreames are ſhallow, and many ponds are quite dried up. And this help for which the Pſalmiſt in this caſe cryeth unto God, is of large conſideration and extent (as Mr *Aynſworth* noteth,) reaching in every regard to the neceſſities and exigences of ſuch times, wherein Gods worthies are with-drawn from the world, by ſtroaks of death. Help us to be awakened, humbled and reformed by theſe rods. Help with wholſome ſupport, comfort: and ſanctifying grace. Help to make up theſe wofull breaches, And in the meane time, to hope in the promiſes of thy grace, whereby thou art obliged to be a very preſent help in time of trouble. Pſal. 12. 1. *Diu cogitabundum, & dolorem cordis, & inſtantia mali hujus conſiderationem, intra ſe premens tandem ſic prorumpit, & ita ſuum animum pius.* Muſc. in Pſal. 12. 1.

2d Duly Consider Gods hand and end, in taking away the righteous.

Having thus endeavoured to quicken and direct your lamentation, I proceed to speak a little unto the second duty (*viz.*) consideration. And doubtlesse this is as expressly called so as the former, yea hereby the former will become the more reguler and proffitable. To move this consideration minde the 3d Commandement of Almighty God. *Thou shalt not take the Name of of the Lord thy God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltlesse, who taketh his Name in vain.* Every providence of God holdeth forth much of Gods Name, which must not be passed over without consideration and improvement, therefore much lesse such administrations as this which I now have under discourse, as Mr *Calvin* well observeth.

Nec ullum minutum opus Dei, præteriundum hoc autem præ aliis speculum providentiæ, Calv. in Text.

Here I shall touch upon some of the particulars, which are comprehended in this consideration, the want whereof, together with contrary apprehensions and dispositions, are judged by Interpreters, to be the *not considering*, which is blamed in the Text.

Mich. 6. 9. 2 Cor. 34. 27, 28.

2. As Gods hand is to be acknowledged (*The man of wisdome will see thy Name*) so that what his Spirit speaketh, in regard of such dispensations, must be beleeved, (*viz.*) That the Lord, in love to his faithfull servants, taketh them unto himselfe: and that their departure out of the world, doth more then whisper, the approach of some common judgement. This was manifested before, and therefore those are here blamed, who surviving in such times, judge themselves in a safe condition, and blesse themselves in that respect, as more favoured by the Lord, because their lives are lengthened.

Sublatis iis, non dubium est quin mundus, accrbissimis det pernicaciæ suæ pœnas. Marlor.

Alijs morientibus salvi maneant et incolumes. Calvin.

Esa. 3. 1.

Non repetent hæc justo, Dei judicio fieri. Marlor.

2. The death of godly ones, must be looked upon, as a judgement, as a token of Gods displeasure, unto the places from which they are thus translated. Such therefore are wholly blameworthy, who account it rather a priviledge, then a penalty to be deprived of them, who are eminently godly in their conversation, being weary of them, as the *Gadarens* were of Christ in their coasts.

Mic. 6. 9.

3. The causes of such breaches made, must be enquired and well weighed, In these blowes, *the voice of the Lord crieth to the City; Hear ye the rod and who hath appointed it.* Therefore those fall short of due consideration, who only cursorily discourse of what

what is done, without asking themselves or others this question; Wherefore hath the Lord done this? In these cases it is with these people, as it was with *Pharaoh* under Gods plagues, of whom it is said, that *he went unto his house, neither did he set his heart to this.* *Non curet & repitet apud se, quare illi morantur.* Vatabl. Exo. 7. 23.

Now if here this question should be propounded; Wherefore doth God thus take away his faithfull Ministers? I answer.

1. As to expresse his great love to them, and to make way for the breaking forth of his fiery indignation (as was formerly declared,) so to punish the inexcusable ingratitude and spirituall barrennesse of the people who enjoy them. The fruitlesnesse of Gods vineyard under the dews of Heaven, provoked God to resolve, that the *clouds should not any more showre down rain upon it.* And upon this account, many clouds fall of water, many Ministers enriched with abilities were blowed away, by the blasts of divine displeasure. *Execranda hominum ingratitudini mereto debetur.* Malor. in Text. Isa. 5. 46.

2. I may add, Because they are accounted burthens, therefore God removeth them. As when people grow weary of Gods Ordinances, saying, *When will the new-Moons and the Sabbath be gone,* &c. then was brought upon them, *a famine of hearing the word of the Lord.* And in this kinde, to satisfie the sinfull desires of men, is one of the most dreadfull demonstrations of Gods anger that can be imagined. How greatly is Gods wrath kindled, when *he giveth them up to satisfie their lusts,* without check or contradiction. Suppose a peevish patient quarrelling with the Physitians prescriptions and allowance, should receive this answer, that the Physition will neither provide food, nor administer physick any more. Now this is the case under hand, which I commend to your serious consideration: when people complaine of plenty, it is just with God to take away their bread. Amo. 8. 5. 11. Psal. 18. 11. Rom. 1. 24.

3. To minde and prepare for our own departure out of this world; This God desireth, and thus we shall shew our selves to be truly wise: *Oh that they were wise, that they would consider their latter end:* Whereas the Lord layeth in this as a charge against *Babylon, Thou didst not lay these things to thy heart, neither didst remember the latter end thereof.* And this is accounted one fault complained of in the Text, when upon the death of others, even of such who are most pretious in Gods account, our selves doe not Deut. 32. 29. Isa. 47. 7. *Non cogitam, se pariter moritaros.* Labidê

not practically, improvingly meditate upon our own dissolution. This practice would be found variously, admirably advantagious, moving us to doe more and more service for God, his cause, his people, being in daily expectation, to be taken away from all opportunities of service under the Sunne.

4. To arm and antedote our selves against all that hardship and difficulty, which probably may encounter us, by reason of the evils in such times to be expected. The Apostle foretelling at *Ephesus*, the mischiefs which would follow upon his departure, giveth caution to the Elders of the Church who were to survive, that neither themselves nor their relations might be carried down the stream, with the tide of the times. And such a consideration Mr *Calvin* hinteth from the Text, that when the number of pious persons is lessened, we may not fall into compliance with the wicked, who survive and live licentiously.

Act. 20. 7. 28. 29. 30. 31.

Non lupis ululandum, Calvin.

5. To prepare for the losse of other godly ones, both Ministers and others, for we cannot more assure our selves of the lives of them whom we yet enjoy, then we could of them who are now dead and gone: Few of your Ministers whom God yet keepeth in the land of the living, are so likely to live long, as some of those, whose lives the Lord hath unexpectedly shortned; provide therefore for their removall also. And to this end,

1. Expresse your love unto them, in all wayes answerable to their calling and your relation. When the Saints suspected they should see *Pauls* face no more, *they fell upon his neck and kissed him.* The remembrance of your want of respect unto your Ministers, while they were alive, will be an additinn to your sorrow when they are dead.

Act. 20. 37.

2. Endeavour to make more abundant improvement of their company and Ministry. This the Prophet *Zachary* perswadeth upon this consideration: *Turn you now from your evil wayes: Your fathers, where are they? and the Prophets, do they live for ever?* And the Apostle *Pauls* exhortation is suitable: *We beseech you, that you receive not the grace of God in vain, for, behold now is the day of salvation.* Do you not remember those words which our Lord Christ spake with tears; *Oh that thou, even thou hadst known, at least in this thy day, the things of thy peace.* You know not how soon your shining lights may be over-

Zach. 1. 4, 5.

2 Cor. 6. 1, 2.

Luk. 19. 14.

clouded

clouded by death, *therefore walk while you have the light.* Joh. 12.35.

3. Waile you highly prize and reverence your Miniſters, doe not depend ſinfully upon them. The Prophet *Iſaiah* giveth this admonition from this conſideration. *Ceaſe from man, whoſe breath is in his noſtrils, for the Lord of hoſts doth take away the Prophet and the prudent,* &c. Could you infallibly ſecure the lives and liberties of your moſt able and induſtrious Miniſters, yet by placing confidence in them, you would both forfeit them and offend God, therefore theſe many providences which prove their frailty, ſhould be arguments to diſſwade it. And becauſe many are the leſſe laborious in ſeeking the fruitfull improvement of their Miniſters, hoping that they ſhall long enjoy them, therefore inure your ſelves to look upon them as dying daily, and provoke your ſelves to heare every Sermon, as the laſt which they ſhall preach. *To day, while it is called to day, harden not your hearts. Neither boaſt of to morrow, for you know not what a day may bring forth.* It was the folly of *Felix*, to put off the preſent opportunity, when God was dealing with his conſcience by St *Pauls* diſcourſe: *Go thy way* (ſaith he) *for this time, and when I have a convenient ſeaſon, I will call for thee*; for he never afterwards ſaw that ſeaſon. Few Sabbaths ſince, many of you heard him preach in this pulpit, whom death hath now laid in the duſt, and you muſt heare him preach no more. Be wiſe, be wiſe therefore (my beloved) for the future, and improve ſpeedily, frugally your living Miniſters, becauſe you know not how ſoone, how ſuddenly, the righteous may periſh and be taken away from your ſervice.

Iſa 2.22. with Cap. 3.1,2.

Heb. 3. Prov. 27.1.

Acts 24.25.

HAving now finiſhed my diſcourſe upon my Text, I know it is expected that I ſhould ſpeak ſomething of Mr *Ralph Robinſon*, whoſe funerall hath called together this very great aſſembly. But upon this ſubject I ſhall be ſhort, endeavouring to ſpeake much in few words.

He was born at *Heſwall* in *Cheſhire*, in *June* 1614. whereby it appeareth that he was 41 years old compleat now at his death: From his childhood he was diſpoſed to Learning, whereby his Parents were encouraged to educate him for the Univerſity. He was admitted into *Katherine* Hall in *Cambridg*, where he made

good improvement of his time, with helps there enjoyed, to furnish him with abilities, in tendency unto the Ministry. Upon the exercise of his gifts, by preaching in severall Churches in this City, he gained much respect amongst Ministers and others, for the rich gifts and graces with which God had furnished him. When he accepted the Call given, unto the Pastorall charge of this place (*Mary Woolnoth* in *Lumbard street*) he was here ordained and inducted, with solemn seeking of the Lord by fasting and prayer. This I may boldly affirm (with reference to my Text) that he was *a reall, righteous, merciſull man*; and I doubt not, but many hundreds (who were well acquainted with him) will confidently attest this my testimony.

In regard of his Vocation: He was an able, Orthodox, profitable Preacher of the Gospel. As for his Relations, He was a loving Husband, a tender Father, a carefull Pastor, a good Neighbour, a chearfull Companion, a faithfull Friend. In his judgment, affection and practice, he was a thorow, well-grounded Presbyterian, and that upon a Scripture account, being perswaded that way of Church-government to be according unto the minde of God. His conversation was holy and unreproveable, the strength of Gods grace, securing him all his life long, from the least taint of scandall. He was true and steddy unto his principles: He was conscientiously constant to his Covenant; neither hopes nor fears, caused him to warp, or to decline either to the right hand or to the left. He was unweariedly laborious in the work of his Ministry, both upon the Sabbath and his weekly Lecture day, for half the year, as also for the monethly preparation Sermon for the Sacrament: And where is the man who appeared more frequently then Mr *Robinson*, in the exercise of holy fasting and prayer, for which work the Lord had fitted him, with gifts more then ordinary. I think that there is not any person, who ever found him unwilling to make one, in wayes of extraordinary seeking God, according to the necessities of the times. His high parts, great services, accompanied with many expressions of respect, which he received in this City, swelled him not, but were crowned with an humble and meek spirit: for who ever saw him proudly passionate, or contemptuously insulting in his carriage, either towards his equals or inferiours?

Ever ſince he ſet forward in Heaven way, he hath been upon the ſpur, and thence it is, that he hath diſpatched his journey ſo ſoon: We imagined that he had not ſeen his after-noon, and yet behold he hath finiſhed his dayes work, and is gone to reſt! How ſuddenly and how unexpectedly is he taken away from us! Upon Saturday was three weeks he came from *Iſlington* hither, with a purpoſe both to preach twice, and to adminiſter the Sacrament of the Lords Supper on the day following in this place: but friends and Phyſitions diſſwaded him, diſcerning feveriſh diſtempers which himſelf did not complain of. All the time of his ſickneſſe, he was inſenſible of paine, and unapprehenſive of any death-threatning diſeaſe upon himſelf. Being moved to make his Will, his anſwer was, *I will doe it with all readineſſe, though I perceive not in my ſelf any danger of death.* And this he added, *I pray you flatter me not, if Phyſitians apprehend danger, for (I bleſſe God) the thought of death is not dreadfull to me.* Some few further expreſſions to my ſelfe I will briefly relate, and ſo conclude. 1. Returning thanks to a friend, for his affectionate remembrance of him on a day of prayer, he ſaid; *I have (I thank God) loved faſting and prayer with all my heart.* 2. When the preſent frame of his heart was enquired after, this was his anſwer; *Though I have not raviſhing joyes, yet I enjoy an uninterrupted, ſatisfying peace, not queſtioning in the leaſt, mine everlaſting happineſſe, through Gods grace in Chriſt.* And at the ſame time, begging the pardon of his Miniſteriall failings, he profeſſed the comfort which he took, upon the remembrance of his uprightneſſe and faithfullneſſe, notwithſtanding his imperfections. 3. Being moved to relieve his owne ſpirit, by ſilent and ſecret ejaculations, becauſe in regard of his weakneſſe it might prove very prejudicial to have any friend to pray with him, he ſaid, *There is no living without them.* 4. And upon his toſſings and turnings upon his bed, the reſt in Chriſts boſome being ſuggeſted: *O* (ſaith he) *true reſt, can no where elſe be enjoyed.* At this reſt, I am confident, he is now arrived, and we are left upon a troubleſome Sea, to bewaile and to improve our great loſſe.

Here I might, upon the review of my Sermon, make true application of very many paſſages in it, unto this our dear deceaſed friend and brother, but this I muſt refer unto your own practice.

Doubtleſſe his death is matter of much lamentation, becauſe a good man, a man fit for ſervice, a man willing in every kinde to be ſerviceable, a man ſetled in the truth, a man unmoveable from the wayes of Gods holy worſhip, is taken away: His removall (eſpecially in theſe times of ſo much need) is a loſſe not only to the Congregation whereof he was Paſtor, but to the Claſſis wherein he was an active member, yea unto the whole City, unto which he was profitably influentiall. Truly I bleſſe God, to ſee ſo great an Aſſembly, expreſſing ſo much love unto this good man, and ſo much affection under this ſmarting providence, and my prayers ſhall be, that God would ſanctifie this blow, and make up this breach, through the riches of his grace in

JESUS CHRIST.

FINIS.

Upon

Upon the Life and Death of that eminent ſervant of God Mr RALPH ROBINSON *the late able and faithfull Paſtor of* Mary Woolnoth; *who died* June 15th 1655.

IF long *exiſtence* be lifes meaſure, then
Thy life was ſhort, thy years were four times *ten*,
But if that regular *activity*
be lifes *Surveyor*; Thy Nativity
Compared with thy departure makes a *date*
of years that multiply to *Noah*'s rate.
He was a man of *Reſt*, yet did proclaime
warre with the *old worlds* luſts; Thou didſt the ſame.
What coſt and pains and ſloue's did he endure
building the *Arke* a Remnant to ſecure?
His was a ſhadow to that living frame
which thou waſt building to eternal Fame.
Two worlds he ſaw of Sin and Miſery,
The ſecond World is pure Felicity.

Gen. 5. 29. & 2 Pet. 2. 5. *Noah* ſignifies *reſt*.

ROGER DRAKE, Paſtor of *Peters Weſt-Cheap*.

Upon the death of my dear Friend, and much lamented Brother Mr RALPHE ROBINSONNE, late Paſtor of *Mary Woolnoth Lumbard-ſtreet London.*

RAALPHE ROBINSONNE. *Anagr.* Non' ſo able in praer.

WHo *prayes* well, *preaches*, *lives* well; To *pray*, *live*, *preach* Well, are three *Crownes* of Gold to ſuch as *Teach*.
Well didſt thou *preach* and *live*, but *prayd*ſ*t* ſo, *non' So able* was *in Prayer*, as *Robinſon*.
Theſe three *Crowns* end in one, a Crown of *Prayſe*;
Thoſe are Earths work awhile, this Heavens alwayes.

JOHN SHEFFEILD Paſtor of *Swithins*.

GODS Gifts are various, ſome for Learning *Tall*
As *Anakims*, great Schollers; and *that's All*,
No *Preachers*; ſome in *preaching* quick, deep, full,
Lively and piercing, in *prayer* coole, flat, dull.
Some have the *Key of Knowledge*, ſome the *Keyes*
Of *Hearts* and *Heaven* too, with great skill and eaſe
They *open* all, theſe are *Men*, *men of God*,
As erſt *Eliah*, or *Moſes* with his Rod.
Such was our *Robinſon*, a man of skill
To *open* Gods *whole Counſell*, and his will.
He opened *hearts* by *preaching*; and by *Prayer*
He opened *Heaven*, there gain'd he firſt Gods *ear*,
His *favour*, next, then *heart*, his *preſence* now;
Glory from *Grace*, *Grace* doth from *Prayer* flow.
Moſes growes faint, when *Hur* and *Aaron* fail'd
Him on *both hands*, then *Amalek* prevail'd.
London growes faint, ſince two *Iunes* have pul'd down
Two *praying pillars*, chief *Jewels* in her *Crowne*.

Whittaker's

Whittaker's gone and *Robinſon* gone. How!
How are the mighty fallen, and we brought low!
The one *Elijah* was, *Eliſha* th' other,
He a grave *Father* was, Thou a dear *Brother*.
Two * *Maries* Widdowes left, *Barnſby* the laſt
Years *June* remembers, *Woolnoth June* now paſt.
But *Barnſby* hath a *Whittaker* again,
Another *Robinſonne* may *Woolnoth* gain.

* *Mary Magd.* Bermondſey, *Mary Woolnoth* Lumbard ſtreet.

Sic flevit & precatur
J. S.

A ſad Lamentation upon the Death of ſo many famous Miniſters in the City of late years, and a warning to London *thereupon.*

London thy Glory's thin, leanneſs appears.
The *ſeven full Ears* are fallen, ſeven thin ſad years
Portend; *Sampſons* ſeven *locks* are cut and gone;
Wiſedoms ſeven *Pillars* to the ground are thrown.
The ſtaffe, the man of fifty, th' Honourable,
The man for years, and Wiſedom venerable;
Thy famous *Downham, Gouge* and *Gataker,*
Strong, Abbot, Bolton, Robinſon, Whitaker.
See thy *gray haires* betimes, ſee thy *thin Ears.*
Thy *harveſt*'s paſt, thy *winter* ſtorms appears.
There's few *ſhut up or left.* Fly to thy *Mount;*
The Lords long ſuffering thy ſalvation count.
He will not alwayes ſtrive. When he hath ſent
Out *all his Meſſengers,* if none repent,
Hee'l ſay Cut down, *there's now no remedy;*
Cut down this barren Figtree, let it dy.

Sic flevit & deprecatur
J. S.

Radulphe

Radulphe Robinſone, Anag. *On; on; duble Praiers.*

PRay much, gain much, but pray more, and gain more.
On, on; and *double* you your *Prayers* therefore.
More hands make lighter work, few hands work ſore,
On; *double, double on* your *prayers* therefore.
God calls, Church, State, your own wants call for ſtore;
On; *double on*; enforce your *prayers* the more.
For *double Prayers*, I *double Glory* gain.
Double your *Prayers* on Earth, and Heaven obtain.

Jo. Sheffeild.

On the Death of his worthy and Reverend Friend Mr Ralph Robinson *Paſtor of* Mary Woolnoth Lond.

ANother Cedar fallen! ſuch a one
As juſtly may impov'riſh *Lebanon!*
We may prognoſtique; if ſuch Starres doe fall,
Darkneſſe becomes ſoone Epidemicall.
And what deare *Robinſon!* whoſe uſefulneſs
Caſts this great City in a great diſtreſs.
Was not the *Tower* ſufficient, muſt his Zeale
Entombed be to ſerve the Common-weale.
Did not his chaines ſound harſh enough; but muſt
Our joyes in him be buried in the duſt:
So ſweet a friend; ſo Miniſteriall
That now our loſſe is Oecumenicall.
What private dayes did he improve in prayer,
When he was thought the Soules interpreter.

Each

Each cafe could he unravell at the Throne
Of Grace, when he anatomiz'd each groane.
Prayer was his life, how many families
Now wear the iſſues of his teares and cries.
He was ſinnes holy Satyriſt; the State
Could not the heate, of his pure zeale, abate.
One ſingle Starre he was not; he ſo ſhone
His light him ſpake a Conſtellation.
Reaſon and Grace incorp'rate were in him,
Few ſuch as he would make a Sanhedrim.
Which was obſerved, when we did him call,
To Moderate our grave Provinciall.
Church government he did ſo Methodize
Calvin might feel a Metempſuchoſis.
But he is dead; and our *Timotheus*
Hath left the the World, and now is fled from us.
Now Zeale hath found its *Element*: Our Saint
Knowes not now how, to avent his complaint.
His Pulpit now is turn'd into a Throne,
His Faith now widens into Viſion.
Farewell bleſt *Robinſon*, and while with ſtrife
We moane thy death, let us tranſcribe thy life.

Jo. Wells, *Ol. Jewry Lond. Paſtor.*

Upon the much to be lamented Death of worthy Mr Ralph Robinson, *the vigilant and painfull Paſtor of* Mary Woolnoth *in* Lumbard-ſtreet, *who died of a burning Fever* June 15. 1655.

IN pitchy night when frightfull flames break out
unskilfull janglers ſerve to raiſe the rout;
Gods fiery flame hath ſlain a worthy brother,
Which makes me rudely chyme an artleſs ryme with other,
May we but thus to your engines raiſe
faith, praiers, tears, to quench theſe fires we have our bayes.

Lev. 10. All *Israel* must lament
The fiery punishment
That dreadfully did fright
And fully, sadly light
On those rash *Aaronites*.

Surely then *London* must,
The cause is full as just
Much more bewail and weep
Such Watchmen fall'n so soon so fast asleep.
Which did your City keep
In these our dangerous nights.
Your earthly buildings fired raised you to Lamentation,
Such heavenly living temples fall'n, should raise the Nation.

To mourn in lofty verse or stately stile
With high rapt fancies, strain'd hyperbolies,
Over the dead; grief running low the while
In soul, is t' act a part in Elegies;
To wear the cloath of mourners, not the smart,
This is to mourn in garb, more then in heart;
Which sinfull mode in these our vainer times,
Is to be reckon'd 'mongst our many crimes.

I shall then Reader now the less,
my grief in outward words express,
Deep Rivers make no noise
With drilling murmuring voice,
Deep mortall wounds bleed most within,
drown, kill the heart not break the skin.
Oh might thy death our deadly last wound given,
kill us to world and sinne, raise us to Heaven.
Thou then *Elisha*-like might'st raise,
living, and dead, soules to thy praise.
But if *Elishae*'s double part be such,
That some may grutch,
Yet let *Elijahs* Name,
Perfume thy fame
And be then thus, to thee ascrib'd:

Here

Here lyes Elijah Robinson:
Who had Elijahs *spirit on,*
A man of holy heavenly fier
In zeal for Truth: and fervent prayer
So rapt he lived, by Fevers fire he dy'd.

J. FULLER.

Upon the Death of that faithfull Minister of the Gospel Mr RALPHE ROBINSON, late Pastor at *Mary Woolnoth Lumbard-street London.*

RALPHE ROBINSON. *Anagr.* Reap Honnor Blis.

WEep Hecatombes of Tears *guilt Lumbard-street*
Your Sun is set, gone is your Pastor sweet:
Weep Epitaphs in Verse, or write in Gold
sad Elegies, for them that did unfold
Christs misteries, dear *Shute* to glory's gone
and, honour reapes in bliss, blest *Robinsone.*

At Fasts and Lectures weep, let flouds arise
Saints that frequent the morning Exercise
And Sabbath Ord'nances, Rivers of Teares
bemoane our sinnes, our losse, our griefs, our feares:
Weep *London* weep, thy Stars and Cedars fall
Chariots and Horsemen God from thee doth call.

In one sad yeare ascends blest *Whitaker,*
then pious and most learned *Gataker,*
And now deare *Robinson* in glory blest
by * *Simeons Nunc Dimittis* laid to rest:
Honour and bliss they reap in Heavens glory,
Let's live their lives and so inbalme their story.

* Mr *Simeon* *she* preacht their three Funeral Sermons.

A zealous

A zealous Fever sent him to his bed
whose fervor was so hot for Christ our Head.
Zealous in Faith, zealous in Covenant,
zealous in Pray'r, in life a zealous Saint;
Zealous i'th Tower, i'th Church, in Classes all,
and zealous now in Heavens Provinciall.

Blest *Love*, make way for those that follow thee
in Life, in Love, in Zeal, in Constancy.

But stop dull Muse lest thou disturbe by verse
this sacred Shrine, this sad lamented Herse,
Onely let's pray that still there may be hope
another Sun to rise i'th Horoscope.

So weeps and prayes
JOHN [illegible]RING
Minister of the Gospel
at *Brides London.*

FINIS.

There are lately published severall Funerall Sermons preached by Mr Simeon Ashe, *viz.* Gray Hayres crowned with Grace, *preached at the Funerall of* Mr Thomas Gataker. Christ the Riches of the Gospell, and the hope of Christians, *preached at the Funerall of* Mr William Spurstow. The Efficiency of Gods Grace in bringing gain-saying Sinners to Christ, *preached at the Funerall of that worthy Gentleman* Mr Robert Strange. *All to be sold by* George Sawbridge *at the Signe of the Bible on Ludgate-hill.*

There is lately published an excellent Sermon of that Reverend Divine Mr Ralph Robinson, *preached before his Countrymen of* Cheshire; *To be sold by* Stephen Bowtell *at his Shop in the Entry of Woolnoth Church in* Lumbard-street London.